

## COMMENTARY

### POINTS OF VIEW: RESPONSE TO REVEAL

The report of David Douglas's death (Reveal, *Madroño* 36:137–140, 1989), to paraphrase Mark Twain, has been exaggerated. Nothing that editors can do, fortunately, will change the honor owed to and bestowed upon that intrepid explorer.

Reveal argues that botanical honor accrues from authorship of names. I believe that this view is both faulty and dangerous.

It is faulty because many standardly used names were not proposed by the foremost expert in the group. As one common kind of example (portrayed here in an extreme form), consider that the greatest contribution to botanical knowledge in a group was made by a botanist who, after years of detailed study, reduced many unjustifiable specific epithets to varietal rank. Soon after, another botanist, compiling a manual, decided to use those names and circumscriptions at subspecific rank. Accordingly, he recombined all the names of the expert botanist, leaving the expert's name unattached as author to any epithets in the group to which he devoted his life. This unfairness is required by the rules of nomenclature, which have no concern with *recognition* of individuals.

Furthermore, Reveal's assumption of honor-to-the-author is dangerous because it leads individuals to wish their names attached to a large number of taxa as a measure of their great contribution to systematic botany. Over the long run, no urge could be more counterproductive to the accepted goal of stability of scientific names.

Citation of persons in addition to the publishing author (as allowed through proper use of "in" and "ex") serves a historical function but not a nomenclatural one. Given serious constraints on space, the editors of *The Jepson Manual* chose to leave explication of botanical history to authors and works able to focus adequately on this important and fascinating subject. We chose instead to concentrate on allowing the easiest possible identification of California plants, with the most accurate possible morphological and range descriptions.

In *The Jepson Manual*, David Douglas will be listed as author only rarely—for those names that he actually published. But his name will be repeated many times, commemorated in common names and specific epithets appropriate to his pioneering work.—JAMES C. HICKMAN, Jepson Herbarium, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### TEMPORARY NEW ADDRESS FOR EDITOR OF MADROÑO

From 1 September 1989 to 18 December 1989 Dr. David J. Keil, Editor of *MADROÑO*, will be on sabbatical leave. Manuscripts, proofs, and other correspondence should be sent to:

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